



U.S. Trade Center News

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America Week in Sylhet Huge Success

On September 14, the Embassy's America Week in Sylhet -- a week-long celebration highlighting commercial, cultural, consular, military, and USAID programs in Bangladesh's largest northeastern city -- kicked off with a variety of events.

Ambassador Harry K. Thomas participated in an opening ceremony to inaugurate post's catalog show, which included the U.S. Commerce Department's New Products USA catalogs, catalogs from U.S. firms in the building and home furnishings industry, catalogs from U.S. firms in the power generation sector, and a display from post's Foreign Agriculture Service (FAS) office. Over 250 guests and representatives of the media attended the inaugural ceremony. (America Week photos and the Ambassador's remarks at the opening ceremony are posted on our website: www.usembassy-dhaka.org.)



Ambassador Thomas receives a plaque from Sylhet Chamber of Commerce and Industry President Md. Mohiuddin

The Embassy sponsored free seminars on a variety of trade-related subjects throughout the week. Representatives from the Embassy's Political/

Economic Section and FAS office joined two USAID partners, GTN and JOBS, to discuss opportunities for expanding trade and investment with the United States. Citibank, American Express, Neno, and American Ready Cash presented a seminar on financial remittances, while Winrock International, another USAID partner, highlighted the Mission's environmental programs in Bangladesh.



Ambassador Thomas visits a USAID partner booth at the Hafiz Complex in Sylhet

American Express and the Embassy's Consular Section Chief discussed travel and tourism to the United States, and the U.S. Trade Center's Export Promotion Manager delivered two presentations on BuyUSA. Our seminars were a resounding success, each attracting over 100 attendees.

On September 17, the Ambassador delivered a keynote address on deepening U.S.-Bangladesh economic relations to the American Chamber of Commerce, which relocated its successful monthly luncheon program from Dhaka to Sylhet. Caterpillar's local agent, GETCO, which sponsored the lunch, displayed one of its generators at the entrance to the pavilion where our America Week events took place. Also on display was a model of a barge-mounted power plant that NEPC Power Consortium Ltd. is operating in Bangladesh.



Sylhet Mayor Badar Uddin Kamran delivering remarks at the America Week opening ceremony

Business wasn't the only thing on the agenda during our time in Sylhet. The Embassy's Defense Attaché's office and the American Center wowed audiences with two musical performances that each highlighted uniquely American music. On September 15, members of the U.S. Navy band

"Dixieland Express" played Dixieland jazz to several hundred spectators. On September 16, the American Center sponsored a performance by the "American Songbirds" – two regionally resident American performers, Terri Khan from Dhaka and Lee Allison-Sibley from Calcutta, who sang classical American folk tunes. The American Songbirds were a hit, and subsequently performed in Dhaka, as did the Dixieland Express, to appreciative audiences.

USAID partners used exhibit booths, presentations, and site visits to highlight their projects. Some booths used computers to show films and pictures, others had models of their projects to display their work. Many organizations used the opportunity to showcase their products: food, fish, handicrafts, learning tools, and solar panels.

Stay tuned for more information about our next America Week event!



U.S. Trade Balance with Bangladesh

Data represent commercial (deliveries) trade. Totals do not include exports from export processing zones and exports tied to donor or grant assistance.

Trade with Bangladesh: 2003

Note: All figures are in millions of U.S. dollars

Month		Imports	Balance
		208.30	-192.70
	15.00	182.70	-167.70
March	18.30	165.70	-147.40
April	17.90	154.50	-136.60
May	20.40	151.50	-131.10
June	19.90	168.30	-148.40
July	23.40	226.60	-203.20
August	27.70	209.60	-181.90
September	20.30	197.30	-177.00
Total	178.50	1,664.50	-1,486.00

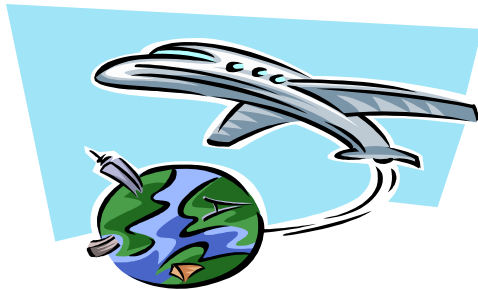
- TOTALS may not add due to rounding.
- Table reflects only those months for which there was trade.
- www.census.gov/foreign-trade/balance/c5380.html
- SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, Foreign Trade Division, Data Dissemination Branch, Washington, D.C. 20233

Embassy to Lead Trade Delegation to Baltimore Electric Power Show

The U.S. Embassy along with the American Chamber of Commerce in Bangladesh will lead a delegation from Bangladesh to the Electric Power 2004 Show March 30-April 1 in Baltimore, Maryland. This event will showcase the power industry, particularly providers of power equipment and services, including boilers and combustion systems, motors and electrical equipment, uniform power systems, diesel, steam and gas generators, renewable energy systems, and water and wastewater treatment material.

A variety of seminars and workshops are planned during the show, and the Department of Commerce office in Baltimore will arrange factory visits for delegates.

The U.S. Embassy and the American Chamber of Commerce are presently soliciting names of individuals who would be suitable to join our delegation. We ask that interested individuals contact the American Chamber of Commerce as soon as possible. The American Chamber can be reached by phone (861-3391); fax (831-2975); or email (amcham@bangla.net).



Candidates selected by the Embassy to join our delegation will have to make their own visa arrangements through American Express (at the Motijheel, Gulshan or Chittagong branches) or with Securex in Sylhet. Each delegate will pay for his or her own airfare, and will be responsible for the cost of meals and accommodation while in Baltimore. Selected delegates must purchase their airline tickets from the Embassy's nominated travel agent.

Trade Shows, Trade Shows And . . . More Trade Shows

Although the Embassy will not be leading a delegation to these shows, interested participants can obtain additional information by contacting the Embassy's U.S. Trade Center at 885-5500 or by visiting the trade show's website. Happy travels!

Asian Aerospace 2004 will be held in Singapore February 24-29, 2004. For more information, please contact the Embassy's U.S. Trade Center.

The **Agriculture Expo** will be held in Tulare, California (about 100 miles north of Los Angeles) February 10-12. Ag Expo is a 200-acre showplace of products, equipment, irrigation, and water flow technology for the farm, dairy and ranch. (www.farmshow.org)

The **CITA Wireless Show** will take place in Atlanta March 20-24, 2004, and will showcase the latest wireless, mobile and Internet technology. Please contact the U.S. Trade Center for more information.

Computer and telecommunications technology will be on display at the **International ICT Expo** in Hong Kong April 14-17, 2004. For further details, please contact the U.S. Trade Center.

Bangalore Bio 2004 will showcase the biotechnology industry. The show will take place in Bangalore, India from April 14-17, 2004. Please contact the Embassy's U.S. Trade Center for more information.

The **Food and Hotel Asia Show** will take place in Singapore April 20-23, 2004, and will display the latest food service products. Please contact the Embassy's U.S. Trade Center for more information.

Franchise Expo 2004 April 30-May 2, 2004, Washington, D.C.

Bangladeshi entrepreneurs interested in launching a U.S. franchise in Bangladesh will not want to miss this show. To learn more about the numerous franchise opportunities waiting for you to explore, visit www.ifeinfo.com or contact the Embassy's U.S. Trade Center.

Ambassador Calls for Deepening U.S. – Bangladesh Economic Relations

On September 17, at the American Chamber of Commerce luncheon in Sylhet, Ambassador Harry K. Thomas delivered a keynote speech on deepening U.S.-Bangladesh economic relations.

The Ambassador noted that Bangladesh sells approximately one-third of its \$6 billion total exports to the United States. The U.S., on the other hand, sold only \$269 million to Bangladesh in 2002 -- a drop of \$38 million from 2001 -- giving Bangladesh a \$1.8 billion trade surplus with America. The U.S. is the largest foreign investor in Bangladesh with fixed direct investments totaling nearly \$1.3 billion.

Although our bilateral relationship with Bangladesh continues to deepen and broaden, the U.S. and Bangladesh can do more to expand our economic relations, the Ambassador said. He outlined five events that will enable our two countries to achieve this objective.

First, Ambassador Thomas explained, a bilateral tax treaty with Bangladesh, which he anticipates signing soon, will make it easier and more attractive for U.S. firms to invest in Bangladesh. The Ambassador said he is optimistic that Bangladesh and the U.S. will also conclude shortly a Trade and Investment Framework Agreement or "TIFA." The TIFA will establish a bilateral council that will meet periodically to promote trade, resolve disputes that may arise, remove hurdles to expanded investment, and explore avenues of cooperation at the World Trade Organization.

Third, the Ambassador said he looks forward to seeing Bangladesh improve over the next few months its protection of intellectual property rights. "Strong, effective intellectual property protection," he said, "is the cornerstone on which an attractive investment climate can be built." He noted that strong IPR can stimulate the development of markets within Bangladesh, encourage the transfer of technology from abroad, and create a higher quality and technically prepared labor force.

Fourth, the Ambassador expressed his optimism that the Government of Bangladesh will soon take

immediate steps to improve labor conditions in the country's export sector, particularly its Export Processing Zones. He pointed out that consumers in the U.S. are increasingly basing their purchasing decisions on a country's support for internationally recognized labor rights.

By implementing these standards in factories exporting to the U.S., the Ambassador explained, Bangladesh can take advantage of this growing consumer trend. He was concerned, however, that if Bangladesh did not take these steps it may lose duty-free access to the U.S. market.

photo

Finally, the Ambassador mentioned a number of trade missions the Embassy is planning that will build links between Bangladeshi and American businessmen.

The Ambassador noted that these five events will help the U.S. expand its economic relations with Bangladesh, but he cautioned that Bangladesh will also have to implement significant political reforms for our economic ties to deepen considerably. "Improving the rule of law, tackling corruption, and establishing an independent judiciary to protect property and the sanctity of contracts are essential if Bangladesh is to reach economic growth levels I know it is capable of achieving," he said. As the Bangladeshi economy grows so will trade and investment with the United States.

Visit the Embassy's Web Site

www.usembassy-dhaka.org

- Learn about U.S. Trade Center services
- Understand current issues and events
- Learn about visa procedures
- Read about Muslim life in America

The Facts About GSP

The U.S. Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) program enables more than 140 beneficiary developing countries and territories, including Bangladesh, to import into the U.S. over 5,000 categories of products duty-free.

GSP creates trade opportunities for developing economies and encourages broad-based economic development. Last year, imports into the U.S. valued at more than \$17.5 billion entered duty-free under the GSP program.

Bangladesh exported to the U.S. approximately \$40 million worth of goods duty-free under the GSP program in 2002. The GSP program encourages beneficiaries to

- Eliminate or reduce significant trade barriers to goods, services, and investment;
- Afford all workers internationally recognized worker rights;
- Establish tough laws governing child labor;
- Promote the fight against international terrorism; and
- Provide adequate and effective protection of intellectual property rights.

GSP benefits may be removed, among other things, when beneficiary countries fail to protect U.S. intellectual property or fail to ensure internationally recognized worker rights.

Internationally recognized labor standards include the right of association, the right to bargain collectively, prohibition from forced or compulsory labor, minimum age for child employment, and the right to acceptable work conditions. These are standards developed by international organizations, such as the International Labor Organization, of which Bangladesh is a member.

The protection of internationally recognized labor rights is required in numerous U.S. trade laws that extend duty-free privileges to beneficiary countries.

Beginning in 1993, Bangladesh has enjoyed \$300 million in duty-free exports to the U.S. based on a promise that Bangladesh would establish internationally recognized labor rights in its two Export Processing Zones by January 1, 2004.

OUTREACH 2004

Helping Rebuild Iraq

Outreach 2004 is an exhibition and conference conceived in response to President's Bush call to help secure Iraq's transition to self-government and economic recovery, as well as promote peace and economic stability in the region. Outreach 2004 will take place January 11-13 in Amman, Jordan and will bring together companies that are seeking business or partners in the Middle East market, including Iraq.

Outreach 2004 will feature a series of presentations by Iraqi ministers, Coalition Provisional Authority officials, and representatives from other countries, as well as workshops offering instruction on how to do business with Iraqi officials and business leaders from throughout the region. It will showcase the latest equipment, services, and technology by exhibitors and foster an exchange of information and ideas.

This event offers potential exhibitors and participants an excellent environment for displaying their equipment or services, presenting their sales message, meeting and interacting with potential partners, agents or distributors, and exploring investment opportunities that address the needs of the region, especially of the Iraqi nation.

For more information on Outreach 2004, please visit www.Kallman.com and for general information on Iraq reconstruction, visit www.Export.gov/Iraq.

Photo

Deputy Chief of Mission Judith Chammas and AmCham President Aftab-ul Islam (left) inaugurate a store in Dhaka selling American-made Jordana cosmetics

Understanding the New U.S. Bioterrorism Regulations

New U.S. bioterrorism regulations require exporters of food products to (1) register and (2) provide advance notice of food imported to the U.S.

Registration Procedures

The Bioterrorism Act requires domestic and foreign facilities that manufacture, process, pack, or hold food for human or animal consumption in the U.S. to register with the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Facilities must register by **December 12, 2003**. In the event of a bioterrorism incident or an outbreak of food-borne illness, registration information will help the FDA to determine the location and source of the event and permit the agency to notify quickly affected facilities.

This new regulation pertains *only* to facilities that manufacture, process, pack, or hold food, as defined in the regulation, for consumption in the U.S. Examples of "food" include:

- Dietary supplements and dietary ingredients
- Infant formula
- Beverages (including alcohol and bottled water)
- Fruits and vegetables
- Fish and seafood
- Dairy products and shell eggs
- Raw agricultural commodities for use as food or components of food
- Canned and frozen foods
- Bakery goods, snack food, and candy
- Live food animals and animal feeds and
- Pet food

Who must register? The owner, operator, or agent in charge of a domestic or foreign facility or an individual authorized by one of them, must register by **December 12, 2003**. A foreign facility must designate a **U.S. agent** (for example a facility's importer or broker), who must live or maintain a place of business in the U.S. and be physically present in the U.S., for purposes of registration.

What facilities do NOT have to register? Private residences of individuals, non-bottled water drinking collection centers, transport vehicles that hold food in the usual course of their business, farms, restaurants,

retail food establishments, and nonprofit food centers, and vessels that harvest/transport fish.

Do all foreign facilities have to register? No. If a foreign facility that manufactures, processes, packs, or holds food sends it to another *foreign* facility for further manufacturing, processing or packaging before the food is exported to the U.S., only the *second* foreign facility must register. However, if the second foreign facility performs only a *de minimis* activity, such as putting on a label, *both* facilities would be required to register. Also, any foreign facility that *packs or holds* food after the last foreign manufacturer/processor of the food must register.

How can a facility register? Registrants must use Form 3537 to register or update a registration. Facilities may register online via the Internet at www.fda.gov/furlis. There is no fee.

What happens if a facility does not register? Failure to register, update required elements, or cancel a registration could result in civil and/or criminal penalties. If a foreign facility fails to register, food from that facility may be subject to seizure.

Prior Notice of Imported Food Shipments

Importers or brokers usually provide prior notice information to the Bureau of Customs and Border Protection (CBP) when foods arrive in the U.S. Now, the Bioterrorism Act requires this information to be provided to the FDA. Most imported food shipments can comply by using CBP's Automated Broker Interface of the Automated Commercial System (ABI/ACS). **Prior notice can be submitted either through ABI/ACS or FDA's Prior Notice System Interface beginning December 12, 2003.**

When must prior notice be submitted? Prior notice must be received and confirmed by the FDA no more than 5 days before arrival and, as specified by the mode of transportation, no fewer than: 2 hours before arrival by road; 4 hours before arrival by air or by rail; and 8 hours before arrival by water.

Who must submit prior notice? Any individual with knowledge of the required information may submit the prior notice, including, but not limited to, brokers, importers, and U.S. agents. FDA will issue a confirmation of prior notice to the transmitter upon successful receipt of the prior notice information.

What if prior notice information is not given? Food that is imported or offered for import with inadequate prior notice is subject to seizure.